

REMARKS

Claims 1-12 and 14-21 are pending. By this Amendment, Claim 13 is cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer, the subject matter recited therein has been incorporated into Claim 1 by amendment herein; and Claims 2 and 6-8 are amended clarity purposes only. As such, Applicants respectfully submit that no new matter is presented herein.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants acknowledge and appreciate the indication by the Examiner that Claims 13 and 18-21, although objected to for being dependent upon a rejected base claim, i.e., Claim 1, would be in condition for allowance if rewritten in independent form to include all of the features of the base claim and any intervening claims.

In this regard, Claim 1 has been amended herein to incorporate the allowable subject matter of Claim 13, which has been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. As such, Applicants respectfully submit Claim 1 is now in condition for allowance. Moreover, Claims 2-12 and 14-21 depend from Claim 1. As such, Applicants respectfully submit these nineteen (19) dependent claims should also be deemed allowable for at least the same reasons that Claim 1 is allowable as well as for the additional subject matter recited therein.

Withdrawal of the objection to Claims 13 and 18-21 is respectfully requested.

Claim Rejection – 35 U.S.C. §112, Second Paragraph

Claims 2-4 and 6-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. Applicants have amended the claims responsive to the rejection. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 1, 3-6, 9-12, 14 and 16-17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,569,494 to Chambers et al. ("Chambers") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,096,159 to Ito et al. ("Ito"). Claim 2 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Chambers in view of Ito as applied to Claim 1 above, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,788,802 to Raney. Claim 7 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Chambers in view of Ito as applied to Claim 1 above, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,599,648 to Kondo et al. ("Kondo"). Claim 8 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Chambers in view of Ito and further in view of Kondo as applied to Claim 7 above, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,614,700 to Yamamoto et al. ("Yamamoto"). Claim 15 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Chambers in view of Ito as applied to Claim 1 above, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,383,558 to Fujiwara et al.

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections. However, in view of Claim 1 being allowable for the reasons discussed above, Applicants respectfully submit the rejections are rendered moot and should be withdrawn.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration of the application, withdrawal of the outstanding objection and rejections, allowance of Claims 1-12 and 14-21, and the prompt issuance of a Notice of Allowability are respectfully solicited.

Should the Examiner believe anything further is desirable in order to place this application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

In the event this paper is not considered to be timely filed, the Applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. Any fees for such an extension, together with any additional fees that may be due with respect to this paper, may be charged to counsel's Deposit Account No. 01-2300, **referencing docket number 108421-00081.**

Respectfully submitted,
ARENT FOX PLLC

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'MOzgu', is positioned above the printed name of the attorney.

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